

# Regent Admission Index

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Why did the freshman admission requirements to the Regent universities change several years ago?**

**A:** In Spring 2006, the Iowa legislature passed House File 2395, requiring the Board of Regents to conduct a study of the current upper one-half class rank requirement which had been in place since 1958. The Board of Regents appointed an Admissions Study Team, including representatives from the Board of Regents and each of the three Regent universities, to conduct this study. After reviewing a large volume of data, the Admissions Study Team created the Regent Admission Index (RAI) and recommended that the RAI replace the current upper-half class rank requirement. This recommendation was approved by the Board of Regents and went into effect for freshmen entering the Iowa Regent universities beginning Fall 2009.

**Q: What exactly is the RAI?**

**A:** A student's RAI score is derived from one of two mathematical equations that include those factors that have been shown to be predictors of academic success at the Regent universities: class rank, ACT/SAT scores, grade point average, and core courses completed.

There are two RAI formulas for computing students' RAI scores, the Primary RAI Formula (for students whose high schools provide class rank) and the Alternative RAI Formula (for students whose high schools do not provide class rank). Below is a detailed description of each formula:

Primary RAI Formula (for students whose high school provides class rank)	Alternative RAI Formula (for students whose high school does NOT provide class rank)
(1 x Percentile class rank) + (2 x ACT composite score) + (20 x Cumulative GPA) + (5 x Number of years of high school core courses) RAI score	(3 x ACT composite score) + (30 x Cumulative GPA) + (5 x Number of years of high school core courses) RAI score

*Note: For purposes of calculating the RAI, SAT scores will be converted to ACT composite equivalents, 99% is the top value for high school rank, 4.00 is the top value for GPA, and the number of high school core courses completed is expressed in terms of years or fractions of years (e.g., one semester equals 0.5 year). Applicants whose academic records do not include all of the factors listed above, excluding class rank, will be evaluated on an individual basis by the Regent universities to which they apply.*

**Q: Does this mean each Regent university no longer has minimum high school course requirements for admission?**

**A:** No. Each Regent university still has its own minimum high school course requirements for admission. These requirements really serve as the first screen in the admission decision

process. In other words, if the students don't meet these minimum high school course requirements, they generally won't be offered admission, regardless of their RAI score.

**Q: Why does the RAI represent an improvement over the previous upper-half class rank requirement?**

A: There are two primary reasons. First, the RAI takes into consideration multiple factors which have been shown to be predictors of academic success at the Regent universities. As a result, the RAI does a better job of predicting academic success. Second, the RAI provides a real incentive for high school students to take additional core courses, especially during the all-important senior year.

**Q: What if our school doesn't provide a class rank for our students?**

A: The Alternative RAI Formula is used to calculate the RAI score for applicants whose high schools do not provide class rank, while the Primary RAI Formula is used to calculate the RAI score for applicants whose high schools do provide class rank.

Below is a detailed description of both formulas:

Primary RAI Formula (for students whose high school provides class rank)	Alternative RAI Formula (for students whose high school does NOT provide class rank)
$\frac{(1 \times \text{Percentile class rank}) + (2 \times \text{ACT composite score}) + (20 \times \text{Cumulative GPA}) + (5 \times \text{Number of years of high school core courses})}{\text{RAI score}}$	$\frac{(3 \times \text{ACT composite score}) + (30 \times \text{Cumulative GPA}) + (5 \times \text{Number of years of high school core courses})}{\text{RAI score}}$

*Note: For purposes of calculating the RAI, SAT scores will be converted to ACT composite equivalents, 99% is the top value for high school rank, 4.00 is the top value for GPA, and the number of high school core courses completed is expressed in terms of years or fractions of years (e.g., one semester equals 0.5 year). Applicants whose academic records do not include all of the factors listed above, excluding class rank, will be evaluated on an individual basis by the Regent universities to which they apply.*

**Q: Does an RAI score of at least 245 mean the student will be automatically admitted to any of the three Regent universities?**

A: Yes, provided the student also meets the university's minimum high school course requirements for admission.

**Q: Does an RAI score below 245 mean the student won't be admitted to any of the Regent universities?**

A: Not necessarily. Each university will evaluate applicants with less than a 245 RAI score on an individual basis and make their own admission decisions. Those admission decisions will be specific to each university. In other words, a student with less than a 245 RAI who is offered admission to one university is not guaranteed admission to the other two universities.

**Q: Why are the SCED codes being used to identify those courses that can be counted in the RAI calculation?**

A: Given that nearly all of the Iowa high schools have provided SCED codes for their courses as required by the Iowa Department of Education, the Regent universities determined that using the SCED codes provides a clear and uniform method of advising the secondary schools which of their courses may be counted toward the RAI calculation.

**Q: Where can I find a list of the approved SCED codes?**

A: A current list can always be found online at [www.regents.iowa.gov/RAI/SCED.pdf](http://www.regents.iowa.gov/RAI/SCED.pdf).

**Q: Since the high schools assign the SCED code numbers to their own courses, does this mean the high schools have control over which of their courses can be counted in the RAI calculation?**

A: The short answer is yes. It is our expectation, though, that the SCED code numbers that high schools assign to their courses are a true reflection of the course content and not of the high school's desire to simply have as many of their courses as possible on the approved list. Those schools that assign inappropriate SCED codes to their courses will only end up hurting their students' chances of being successful once they enroll at a Regent university.

**Q: Why are only English, math, science, social studies, and foreign language courses acceptable for the RAI? What about courses in areas like computer science, music, art, etc.?**

A: When the RAI requirements were in the early stages of being developed, the decision was made to restrict the acceptable courses to the five core subject areas mentioned above. The reason behind this decision is that all students are expected to have completed a minimum level of preparation in each of these core subject areas (with the exception of foreign language for some majors) before they enter a Regent university. While courses in other subject areas are certainly beneficial for college-bound students, especially for those who wish to pursue majors in those respective fields, they are not courses that all Regent university bound students should be expected to have completed. While courses in areas like computer science, art, music, etc. are generally not counted in the RAI calculation, they will be viewed favorably by the admissions officers when they consider applicants who fall below the RAI 245 automatic admission score.

**Q: Our school is on a trimester system. How does that impact the calculation of our students' RAI scores?**

A: Students are awarded 5 points for every year of core courses they will complete by graduation. Therefore, a student who completes one trimester of a core course would be awarded 1.67 points (1/3 of 5), and a student who completes two trimesters of a core course would be awarded 3.33 points (2/3 of 5).

**Q: What about high school core courses that are completed before ninth grade?**

A: In general, high school core courses completed before ninth grade may be counted in the RAI calculation. If the course is an obvious sequential course (e.g., Spanish 1, Algebra 1), it does not need to be listed on the high school transcript in order to be counted in the RAI calculation, provided a higher level course appears on the transcript (e.g., Spanish II, Algebra 2). However, if the course is not an obvious sequential course (e.g., Biology, American History), the course must appear on the high school transcript in order to be counted in the RAI calculation.

**Q: What about college courses that are taken in high school?**

A: College courses taken in high school may be counted in the RAI calculation only if they fall into one of the five core subject areas: English, math, science, social science, or foreign language. In order to be counted in the RAI calculation, these college courses must be listed on the high

school transcript or a college transcript must be provided to the university. College courses taken in high school do not receive any additional weight when the RAI score is calculated. For example, one semester of college course work would generate an additional 2.5 RAI points since students receive 5 points for every year of core courses completed.

**Q: Our students have the option of taking Algebra 1 over a two-year period. How is that factored into their RAI score?**

A: Only the second year may be counted. When schools assign the SCED code number, they should assign a code that begins with 02053 to the first year course of a two-year Algebra 1 sequence, and they should assign a code that begins with 02054 to the second year course of the two-year Algebra 1 sequence. The 02053 course will not be counted in the RAI calculation, but the 02054 course will be counted.

**Q: What about integrated courses that combine more than one subject area? For example, our school offers a course titled Heritage that is taught jointly by our English and social studies departments.**

A: There are SCED codes that address courses like this (e.g., 01055 for American Literature/History). These codes have been approved for the RAI.

